

North East case study for Heritage Counts 2015

Region:	North East
Theme demonstrated by case study:	Community involvement in supporting conservation area heritage through local planning processes
Name of project/group:	Tynemouth Village Association
Lead contact:	Richard Giles
Location:	North Tyneside

Short description of project:

Tynemouth Village is a tourist destination of remarkable character with a historic core of attractive 18th and 19th century buildings dominated by the ruins of Tynemouth Priory on the headland overlooking the entrance to the Tyne.

This heavily used conservation area was, however, showing signs of wear and tear. A comprehensive plan for the future care and development of the village was needed to help manage conflicting priorities for pedestrians, motorists and land-use.

The Tynemouth Village Association therefore sought to develop a Conservation Area Management Strategy to inform future decision making about the environment of Tynemouth Village. This framework aimed to conserve what was best about the heritage and character of Tynemouth while remaining sensitive to the needs of all who live and work in the village or come to enjoy its amenities.

The project was informed by a consultation process that brought together different interest groups within the community, including North Tyneside Council, Tynemouth Village association, local business community, schools and other action groups. This process was facilitated by the North of England Civic Trust who also drafted the Conservation Area Management Strategy for submission to the Council as a supplementary planning document.



Tynemouth conservation area © Historic England

Why did you get involved with this project or activity?

Despite the excellent stewardship of our local heritage by the local authority, Historic England and responsible property owners, a gradual attrition of the historic environment is inevitable without clear guidelines to channel alterations.

How did you resource your project or activity?

Initial funding was provided by North Tyneside Council, which enabled the appointment of the North of England Civic Trust to facilitate the project and help develop the framework for the conservation and enhancement of Tynemouth Village.

What would have happened without your project or activity?

With no definitive planning document for Tynemouth Village, it was felt that the area would slide imperceptibly into a pattern of less careful conservation area management and that Tynemouth would suffer as a result, becoming less attractive for both residents and visitors alike.

What difference been made by your project or activity?

The Tynemouth Conservation Area Management Strategy has proven useful document for informing development management decisions in the town and for ensuring that the design of any new developments helps to enhance (rather than detract from) the essential character of the town.

What have you learnt from this experience?

Securing involvement from a wide cross-section of the community can be challenging and requires facilitation by a Chair who is sensitive to the needs and priorities of different interest groups.

What does the future hold for your project or activity?

The project task group continues to meet on a quarterly basis and is currently in the process of deciding how to secure funding for additional projects such as a feasibility study to review public space options for parts of the town.

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